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United Nations Institute for Training and Research

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IISD's Side Event at the Second World Summit for Social Development: "Empowering Young Professionals Through Education and Skill Development for Sustainable and Inclusive Growth"

People

Deadline: 4 Nov 2025

Type:	Side Event
Location:	Doha, Qatar
Date:	4 Nov 2025
Duration:	1 Days
Programme Area:	Decentralize Cooperation Programme
Website:	https://www.iisd.org/events/empowering-young-professionals-beyond-gdp
Price:	\$0.00
Event Focal Point Email:	Ebru.sokullu@unitar.org
Partnership:	International Institute for Sustainable Development, , International Institute for Sustainable Development, , International Institute for Sustainable Development

BACKGROUND

Sustainability challenges are global in nature, affecting both people and ecosystems across the planet. Addressing these challenges requires coordinated efforts among governments, the private sector, and civil society. A critical part of the solution lies in engaging youth and young professionals, equipping them to contribute meaningfully through their careers and actions.

Traditional economic metrics like GDP have long been criticized for their limitations. GDP does not account for environmental degradation, unpaid labour, or broader measures of well-being. Recent global initiatives—including the Sustainable Development Goals, the Copenhagen Declaration, and others—emphasize the need for inclusive employment and gender equality as key components of sustainable development.

EVENT OBJECTIVES

This side event explores innovative educational tools and approaches to bridge gaps in learning and skill development. The focus is on empowering youth and young professionals to actively engage in reshaping discussions around the goals of sustainable development and implementing solutions for a more sustainable and inclusive future.

In alignment with the Copenhagen Declaration, the session also emphasizes employment strategies that support equitable sustainable development. It promotes the integration of knowledge, technical skills, and values—such as environmental stewardship, inclusivity, and gender equality—into educational systems. The goal is to foster sustainable lifestyle choices, raise environmental awareness, and dismantle systemic barriers to inclusion.

The session highlights digital tools designed to foster active participation, critical thinking, and practical application of sustainability concepts. These tools address shortcomings of GDP by promoting alternative indicators that measure well-being, natural capital, and social inclusion.

CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

1. How can national curricula integrate concepts such as beyond GDP, environmental stewardship, social cohesion, and well-being without overburdening already stretched education systems? What would be the building blocks of such integration?
2. Please share the most important obstacles: What do you see as the biggest obstacles for your work achieving the impact you want in the next few years?
3. Way forward and the role of educational systems in beyond GDP "If we are moving beyond GDP as a measure of national progress, what kinds of indicators should we use to assess the success of educational systems in contributing to that broader vision?"

Final round quick reflections: "How can we amplify the voices of students and young people in reshaping education and research systems to reflect values beyond economic productivity—such as purpose, mental health, and planetary responsibility?"

METHODOLOGY

Panel discussion

TARGETED AUDIENCE

Representatives from UN, foundations, academia, government, and international organizations in an engaging exchange of ideas and practices